



Department of
**Health, Social Services
and Public Safety**

An Roinn

**Sláinte, Seirbhísí Sóisialta
agus Sábháilteachta Poiblí**

www.dhsspsni.gov.uk

SOCIAL WORKER



“ I really enjoy my social work role as each day brings something new and challenging. As a Social Worker I work with children, teenagers and older people in order to support them. ”

THE HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TEAM NEEDS YOU

SOCIAL WORKER

Social workers operate at the very frontline of society's efforts to support the needs of communities, families and individuals. They provide services for children, families, older people, people with mental health problems, physical or learning disabilities, sensory impairment, those who experience homelessness, and those whose lives are adversely affected by drugs, alcohol and HIV/AIDS. At times they may also exercise formal legal powers, for example to protect children who are at risk, to support people with mental ill health, or in the rehabilitation of offenders.

Skills Required:

Social work often involves working with vulnerable people in sensitive situations. A social worker needs a range of personal qualities such as patience, determination and the ability to help people face painful and distressing problems. They may need to support service users to deal with racism and other forms of discrimination. Social workers must be open-minded and prepared to examine and even change their own attitudes and possible prejudices.

Training Programme:

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council has agreed that, from 2004/05, all social work training courses will be at honours degree level. A new three-year honours degree, the BSc Hons Social Work, will be introduced in September 2004.

BSc Hons Social Work

Queens University Belfast and University of Ulster (Magee) undergraduate full-time three year programme

Entry Qualifications:

University of Ulster: A level requirements are likely to be in the range of grades BBB at A-level (300 UCAS Tariff Points) or equivalent. Queen's University Belfast: the minimum requirements will normally be five GCSE passes at grade C or better, to include English and Mathematics, along with three GCE A-levels or equivalent. There are no subject requirements at A-level. It is estimated that the grades required will be in the region of BBC/ABB although a final decision will depend on the demand for places. Vocational A-levels (AVCE) will be acceptable in lieu of GCE A-levels. Other qualifications such as HNC, HND and Access and Foundation courses will also be considered.

Career Pathway:

There are many career development opportunities leading to specialist posts and to the highest levels of management within statutory and voluntary social services agencies.

Social workers practise in a wide range of settings, including the community, residential care, day care, hospitals, prisons, schools and health centres. Health and Social Services Trusts in Northern Ireland, which deliver statutory sector services on behalf of the four area Health and Social Services Boards employ the majority of social workers. Social workers are also employed in many areas within the voluntary sector.

Professional Recognition:

Those who successfully complete the degree will be offered and required to complete an assessed year in employment before being registered as qualified social workers by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. They will be salaried during this year.

The BSW degree, (followed by the assessed year in employment in Northern Ireland only), will be the professional qualification for social workers in Northern Ireland and the rest of the United Kingdom. The degree will also be recognised in the Republic of Ireland and the rest of the European Union.

How to Apply:

For undergraduate full-time programme, application should be made through Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS).

Web Links:

Queen's University Belfast – www.qub.ac.uk

The University of Ulster – www.ulster.ac.uk

Northern Ireland Social Care Council - www.niscc.info

Contact address for further copies

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